THEMINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) On 13th December, 1999, an accident took place at 02-50 Hours in the international arrival hall at Indira Gandhi International Airport. When the comb plate and the foot plate of the escalator got shifted under pressure creating a gaping hole resulting in the death of a girl child. A high level Committee headed by Shri R.C. Jain, IAS (Retd.) set up to look into the accident, has, in its interim report submitted on 7-2-2000, held OTIS, the company which installed the escalator and Airports Authority of India (AAI) responsible for poor maintenance and supervision of the escalator. AAI has initiated disciplinary action against four employees.

The following steps have been taken by AAI to prevent recurrence of such incidents in future:—

(1) The escalator and other such equipments are being upgraded;

(2) Instructions for use of these equipments have been displayed prominently for the benefit of the users; and

(3) The staff of all the agencies at the airport have been imparted familiarisation training for use of the equipments and for dealing with any unforeseen situation.

Discrepencies in Tender for Haj Pilgrims

1981. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Aviation Authorities intentionally avoided floating of a global tender for carrying Haj pilgrims despite directive of the previous Minister;

(b) whether it is a fact that when a tender was invited in November 1999, top Air India officials ensured that the other five bids were rejected;

(c) whether for not floating the tender earlier the officials used the election Code of Conduct as an excuse when it has to do nothing with annual Haj operations; and

(d) whether a configurations charges extra of $ 50 each passenger have been levied when the aircraft for the pilgrims come fitted with proper seats?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Air India had floated global tender on 9.11.1999 to invite bids for

chartering haj flights during haj season- 2000. The bids of other five parties were rejected by the Haj Tender Committee because they did not confirm to technical requirements and did not furnish the required documentation.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Operation of International Flights from Guwahati Airport

1982.DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMIMAHANTA: Will the Minister of CTVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether necessary arrangements have been made and any date fixed for starting operation of International flights to and from Guwahati Airport which is being upgraded as an International Airport;

(b) if so, what is the date from which such flights will become operational; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport is going to deal with the traffic only of the South Asian countries?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi Airport, Guwahati is a Model Airport and works relating to Arrival Hall and the extension of apron to accommodate six aircraft have been completed. The works relating to expansion of domestic terminal building, strengthening of runway, central airconditioning of terminal building and construction of operational boundary wall are in progress. Commencement of international flights will depend upon the demand and commercial viability of operation. No airline operator has indicated its plan to start international flights so far.

Delay in Services of IC-470

1983.SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of days in a month the Indian Airlines flights IC- 470 was on scheduled time;

(b) whether it is a fact that it remains delayed for 20 days in a month, if so, the action taken by Government in this regard;

(c) whether Government would consider this situation as delay in flight or something less; and